

THE SPIRITUAL ISSUES OF THE WAR

This bulletin is published for readers at home and abroad by the Religious Division of the Ministry of Information, London, to elucidate the spiritual issues at stake in the war, and to provide information concerning the British Churches in wartime, as well as their contribution to post-war reconstruction.

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RELIGION AND THE INVASION OF EUROPE

At the Convocations of Canterbury and York, held last week, both Archbishops spoke of the duties of the Church at the present juncture.

"No Weakness: No Selfishness"— Dr. Temple's Challenge

The Archbishop of Canterbury, in his address to the Convocation of Canterbury on May 23rd, said:—

"We meet at a time when our nation is entering upon what is, we hope, the last phase of the war. Our prayer must be constant that no weakness in us may delay the victory of our arms and no selfishness in us hinder the establishment of truly righteous peace. We fight to throw back the aggression of a tyrannical foe and to end his tyranny. That is our first task. Force can render this service to the cause of human progress; it can check the damage to civilisation that might be caused by force in the hands of evil men. That is itself a great thing and while the war lasts is our primary duty. But that is all that force can do; its function is purely negative. For all positive progress we must look elsewhere—to love of justice, to the spirit of goodwill, and to the self-discipline needed to make these effectual. As we seek God's help to sustain us in the conflict against the aggression of evil, let us no less seek His help to sustain us in the yet more difficult enterprise of establishing justice and fostering goodwill.

"The temptation to relax moral as well as physical effort when the war is over will be very great. But if the hungry peoples are to be fed, if their economic life is to be restored—on which our own prosperity is in turn dependent—our people must continue their self-control and be ready still for restrictions and hardships in the common

interest. And the Church should be foremost in encouraging this spirit and offering examples of it. The task before our nation and its allies is too great for the natural resources of the citizens. Only through dedication to God and His purpose, only in the strength won by such dedication and the faith which inspires it, can we be worthy of the vocation to which the Divine Providence in History is pointing us.

Post-War Reconstruction

"One duty will specially rest on Christian people in the more fortunate countries, of which our own is one; it is the duty of helping our fellow-Christians to re-establish their corporate religious life and the channels of their spiritual influence. It is now, I think, well known that a Committee for the Reconstruction of Christian Institutions in Europe has been set up in this country. It is primarily associated with the World Council of Churches through the British Section of the Provisional Committee of that Council; but as at present the Provisional Committee cannot function freely, it is also under the auspices of the British Council of Churches. In almost all European countries the Churches have suffered terribly. Nothing, we shall agree, is so important as to secure that their life and influence is re-established as rapidly and as fully as possible. In many countries there is need for the re-building of shattered Church buildings; in many there is desperate need for religious literature; in many there is need for help in the training of the ministry. And most of those countries will be for a time extremely poor, so that they can do little to supply their own urgent needs. We should regard this call as St. Paul regarded his collection from the Churches he had founded for the poor saints at Jerusalem. It is an expression of fellowship in the Gospel.

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"I hope that as far as possible the money subscribed will be given to an open fund and distributed by the central bureau according to the need of the various Churches and countries. Certainly many members of the Church of England will be glad to think that their contributions are helping the heroic Bishop Bergraav to re-establish in full vigour the work of the Church in Norway, or are bringing much-needed resources to the leaders of the Dutch Reformed Church who last autumn sent to all parishes the sublimely courageous Pastoral Letter which many of us read in the number of THE SPIRITUAL ISSUES OF THE WAR dated April 27th, 1944. But we have our special obligation to the Old Catholics, with whom we are in full communion, and to the Orthodox Churches between which and our own the ties of affection and regard are daily closer. The Presbyterians of our country and of the United States have special relations with the Reformed Churches of the Continent; other Free Churches will be specially associated with European Protestants; our special responsibility, as Anglicans, both here and in the United States, will be for the Orthodox and for the Old Catholics.

"I feel sure there is no need to commend this cause. We have our own great needs at home; our Anglican dioceses overseas will in many cases have an overwhelming claim—especially, perhaps, in China. But to the Christians who are our fellow-Europeans, alike in Germany and in the countries Germany has oppressed, we must show the spirit of neighbourliness, alike for their sake, for the countries in which they work, and for the world. It may be that the period of Europe's leadership in the world is near its close. Yet the tradition of Europe, its culture, its science must still count for very much in the post-war period. How far is that influence to be a Christian influence? The answer to that question may depend in part upon the generosity of our response to this appeal.

Neighbourliness to Coloured Folk in England

"Meanwhile we have the opportunity to show neighbourliness in a marked degree in our own country. People of many nations have been and are gathered here. Let us seek all possible means of bringing them into fellowship with us. Let us take special care for the coloured folk who, because of the treatment they have sometimes received here or elsewhere, often suppose that they are not welcome, for example, in our churches. They should be expressly and frequently invited to join us in our worship, and, if

communicants of our Church, at Holy Communion—and welcomed when they come. It is one main function of the Church to bind together those whom the natural ordering of life tends to set apart from one another."

Dr. Garbett on the Ministry of Consolation

The Archbishop of York (Dr. C. F. Garbett) in his Presidential Address to the Convocation of York to-day (Wednesday, May 24th) paid a warm tribute to the memory of the late Patriarch of Russia, whom he described as "a very impressive personality, of great force combined with simplicity and friendliness," who "showed wisdom, courage and faithfulness in critical and dangerous days." He asked Convocation to allow him to send in its name a message of heartfelt sympathy with the Russian Church in the loss it has sustained through the death of its venerable Patriarch. (The Canterbury Convocation took similar steps, where a resolution was followed by a service in St. Margaret's, Westminster, attended by many Bishops.—ED.)

Continuing, Dr. Garbett said:—

"I do not propose to speak at any length of my visit to the United States and Canada. I must however take this opportunity of giving the repeated messages of affection and sympathy sent to the Mother Church on various occasions by Bishops, Clergy and Laity of the Churches of the United States and of Canada. The deepest interest was shown in the way in which we are facing the storm of war, and the plans which we are making for the days of peace. I cannot speak too gratefully of the kindness and hospitality I received throughout my visit.

"I was very struck with the vigour and hopefulness of the two Churches. I had also the happiness to meet and confer with many who do not belong to our Communion. On all sides I heard expressions of good will to the British people and admiration for the way in which for long months we endured the attacks from the air and stood alone against the Axis.

"There is no doubt that the United States is as determined as ourselves to fight on until the Axis is rendered powerless. It is not so certain whether this co-operation will continue when the war is over. Most profoundly we hope that she will continue to act in close association with ourselves, with Russia and with China. It is only through the close co-operation of the three great allies, the British Commonwealth, the United States and Russia, that the first steps can be taken in building up a new international order in which all the nations will eventually take their place.

The Coming Struggle

"We are now on the eve of stupendous events. What happens in the next few months may decide for generations the destinies of mankind. We have the right to look forward with strong hope to the outcome of this terrific struggle, but we have no right to expect that it will be short and easy. We shall have to suffer much before victory is gained. We must expect weeks, possibly months, of hardship, suspense, and heavy losses. We shall only deceive ourselves if we imagine that after a few days of heroic assault the ramparts of Europe will be breached and the way thrown open for the triumphant march to Berlin. Victory will be the result of great sacrifice and endurance, both on the part of the armed forces, and of those who in the Merchant Navy, in munition factory, in the mine and on the fields supply them with the sinews of war. Only he that endureth to the end will be saved.

Call to Prayer

"And in this stupendous crisis what is the special duty of the Church, over and above the duty which rests on every good citizen? I well remember a morning spent last September in conference with the Patriarch and the Russian Archbishops as to the special contribution each of our Churches should make to their nation during this time of war. In some directions, through the very nature of the case, the contributions made by our Churches were different. But we were at one in holding that our first duty was to call people to pray.

"In the darkest days of the invasion of Russia there was a great and spontaneous uprising in prayer of millions. It was not prompted from above, it came from the heart of the masses, but the leaders of the Church saw that expression to it was given in liturgical worship. I believe that in the hearts of millions of our own countrymen there will be felt the impulse to pray. We must endeavour to encourage and to train this movement to God, so that both in private and public prayer, at home or in Church, alone or in corporate worship, our people learn to express their fears, their needs, their hopes, for themselves and others before the Throne of God. But we must remember that there are many to-day who have never prayed and do not know how to pray, and in the simplest ways they must be taught the meaning and method of prayer.

"And next the Church has to exercise its ministry of consolation. There are many who have in the past given little thought to what happens after death, but who in the

agony of bereavement will be asking if death is indeed the end. Christianity is bound up with the hope of the life to come. The Church should give this hope to the sorrowful. We need much more definite teaching about the future life. . . .

Ideals

"There is a third duty incumbent on the Church at this time. It must see that the nation keeps clearly before it the high ideals for which it is fighting. Our war aims at their highest are the liberation of the oppressed and the establishment of a new international order in which law is substituted for violence and in which all the nations, the small as well as the great, have freedom to develop gifts and endowments God has given them. But in the course of a long war the noblest ideals become tarnished, the passions of hate and revenge are unloosed, and the calls of self interest and gain become loud. And what perhaps is even more dangerous, disillusionment and cynical despair of a better world take the place of the generous hopes which once inspired us. The Christian Church must bear its witness against these dangers, it must rebuke all tendencies towards hatred and disillusionment, it must insist that with God's help a new world can be built up by men and women who accept Christ as their Lord.

"But while we are engaged in the immediate problems which arise out of this crisis, we must be making ready for the days of peace. I am not now thinking of national planning for the future, nor even of Church Reform, which I regard as quite essential for the work of the Church. I am thinking of the work which should be done in every parish in preparation for the return home of the men and women who are now away. Forgive me if, as one who was a parish priest in a great naval port in the last war, I insist on the importance of the regular visiting of the families of those who are absent, and when it is possible (and in many of the large understaffed parishes it is not possible) of the incumbent keeping in touch with his parishioners who are serving overseas. Neither changes in our worship nor the creation of new parochial societies will have the slightest effect on the demobilised men if they find their parish clergymen never visited their homes in their absence. We are often far too ready to think in the terms of organisations and movements, and to forget that it is pastoral care and personal friendship and sympathy which count most of all in the lives of ordinary men and women.

"I am conscious I have devoted my address to very simple matters. But in an hour of great crisis we want to be reminded of elementary truths and duties. The influence which the Church of England will have on the nation in the years to come will depend not so much on its administrative reforms as on the manner in which its chaplains in the forces and its clergy in the parishes are now leading those committed to their care to know God and to serve Him. And the new Order for which we hope both in our own nation and between the nations will depend largely upon the number and quality of Christians who in personal life and witness dedicate themselves to the service of God and their fellow men."

THE ARCHBISHOP OF YORK'S TOUR IN AMERICA AND CANADA

Although a week or two have elapsed since the arrival in Britain of the Archbishop of York after his tour in America and Canada, we are venturing to give a brief account of his journey. Full reports from America indicating the scale and significance of the tour are only just arriving. The information culled from the reports will, of course, be very familiar to our American readers, but for the sake of readers in Britain and the Dominions the tour should perhaps be recorded as a significant act of ecumenical fellowship in wartime. It has made an interesting sequel to the Archbishop's visits to Moscow in 1943. The Archbishop went to America in response to a long-standing invitation from the Presiding Bishop of the American Protestant Episcopal Church, Dr. H. St. G. Tucker.

America

The Archbishop made the outward journey by sea, arriving in time for Easter. He spent his first few days at Washington, where he was the guest of the British Ambassador, Lord Halifax. He attended an Easter celebration of the Holy Communion in Washington Cathedral and spent the next week in visits to Virginia and Philadelphia, returning to Washington to preach in the National Cathedral on Sunday, April 16th, and to give the second of a number of broadcasts given during his visit to America.

On Wednesday, April 19th, the Archbishop was present at and took part in the consecration of the Very Rev. Angus Dun as fourth Bishop of Washington. Among the Bishops present were Bishop Tsu of Kunming, China, so the ceremony had an ecumenical character. The Archbishop added his seal to the Bishop of Washington's

certificate of consecration. The sermon preached by Bishop Sherrill was a vigorous attack on Isolationism, whether found in Church or international affairs.

From April 22nd onwards, Dr. Garbett was in New York as the guest of the Bishop of New York, Dr. Manning. He preached at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine, where vast congregations were gathered to hear him. The evening address took the form of an important statement by the Archbishop on the principles which he felt to be of supreme importance if a just and durable peace were to be established after the war.

On April 21st the Archbishop paid a visit to Brooklyn Navy Yard and had luncheon in the Naval Barracks, where he met a number of the British officers and ratings who are stationed there.

The Archbishop was received by Mayor La Guardia, the Mayor of New York, and also by the Governor of the State of New York, Thomas E. Dewey.

During the week he met a number of bodies with whom the British Churches are linked in various ecumenical enterprises, notably the International Missionary Council, the Provisional Committee of the World Council of Churches, the Committee on Co-operation with the Church of England, and the Federal Council of Churches.

The Archbishop was given the degree of Doctor of Laws at Columbia University and visited at different times the Union Theological Seminary, Yale University, the College of Preachers and the General Theological Seminary.

It is impossible to record all the meetings, lunches, etc., in which the Archbishop took part, but it must suffice to say that he had opportunities for meeting Clergy, Ministers, students, branches of the English Speaking Union and many other groups of American Churchmen and citizens, all of whom gave him a great welcome, and gathered in great numbers to hear him.

The Archbishop's last Sunday in America was spent at Chicago, where he preached and spoke on several occasions.

Canada

The Archbishop went from America to Canada, where he was the guest of the Primate, the Most Rev. D. T. Owen. He addressed meetings of the Empire Club, and Canadian Club, as well as the National Council for Canadian-Soviet Friendship.

The Archbishop returned to Britain by air, making the complete journey from Montreal to Bishopthorpe, York, within twenty-four hours.